

House Bill 221
March 10, 2009
Presented by Ron Aasheim
Senate Fish and Game Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Ron Aasheim, Administrator of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Park's Communication and Education Division. I appear in support of HB 221.

We believe the change, while minor, is a positive step in our continuing efforts to recruit young hunters.

Under current law a youth (resident or nonresident) who turns 12 years of age during a hunting season is entitled to purchase or apply for special licenses prior to turning 12. Those youth may not hunt until after their 12th birthday.

In order to purchase a license or hunt under the above conditions a youth must be able to show proof of having completed an approved hunter education course.

In addition, under current law, in order to carry or use a firearm in public, a youth under 14 years of age must be accompanied by a person having charge or custody of the child or be under the supervision of a qualified firearms safety instructor or an adult 18 years of age or older who has been authorized by the youths parent or guardian.

None of the above would be affected by HB 221. The only change under HB221 would be that some youngsters would have a few additional weeks, or at most months, to go hunting for the first time.